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Haiti

May 13, 2015

Notice: U.S. Delegation Visits Haiti for Update on the Transition to Convention Adoption Processing and the Status of the Haitian Child Welfare System

Representatives from the Department of State and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) conducted a visit to Haiti March 23-25, 2015. During the trip, the delegation met with the Institut du Bien-Etre Social et de Recherches (IBESR), the Haitian Central Authority for adoptions, USAID, UNICEF, representatives from the Canadian and Spanish Embassy, and several adoption service providers authorized to operate in Haiti. The purpose of the visit was to discuss: Haiti's policies and practices relating to intercountry adoption, the current delays in the Haitian adoption process, completion of the remaining transition cases, and the formulation of a plan for the processing of Hague Convention adoptions. During the visit, the delegation also learned more about proposals to reform Haiti's child welfare system, the circumstances under which children enter children's homes and may become eligible for both domestic and intercountry adoption, and modifications to the country's procedures for intercountry adoptions since the implementation of Haiti's new law.

On April 1, 2014, the Hague Adoption Convention (Convention) entered into force for Haiti. In an effort to facilitate transition to Convention processing, Haiti's central authority for adoption, IBESR, agreed to process as a "transition case" any case in which a Form I-600A or I-600 was filed before April 1, 2014, as long as IBESR has matched the family and a Form I-600 petition is filed with USCIS on behalf of a specific child by April 1, 2016. In order for the United States and IBESR to better identify transition cases during the agreed upon two-year transition period, the Department of State (Department) and USCIS are providing the Haitian government with an updated list of transition cases on a regular basis. This shows the number of non-Convention transition cases filed with USCIS.

The Department recently became aware that adoptive families are experiencing significant delays in the processing of their transition cases by IBESR. The processing delays were discussed during the visit, and IBESR informed the delegation that additional staff and technical support are needed to eliminate delays while maintaining an ethical and transparent adoption process. Based on the information obtained during the meetings, the Department is developing a plan to provide technical assistance to help IBESR improve Haiti's intercountry adoption process. The Department is also working to identify the specific needs of IBESR and is exploring ways to support them in building their capacity. The Department is holding discussions with other receiving countries to consider a multilateral approach to providing assistance to IBESR.

The Department and USCIS are working with IBESR to resolve issues related to non-Convention transition cases and to facilitate Haiti's transition to Convention processing. At this time it is difficult to provide a timeframe for when specific cases will be processed. Families contemplating adopting in Haiti are strongly advised to consider the lengthy delays that may affect an adoption under these conditions. The Department will continue to provide updates as they are available.

Please note that IBESR authorized 18 U.S. adoption service providers to provide adoption services in Haiti. For more information, please review the [April 30, 2015](#) notice for the current list of ASPs. You can view additional information and past adoption notices and alerts related to intercountry adoptions in Haiti [here](#).